

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Registration Form

This form is for use in nominating or requesting determinations for individual properties and districts. See instructions in How to Complete the National Register of Historic Places Registration Form (National Register Bulletin 16A). Complete each item by marking "x" in the appropriate box or by entering the information requested. If any item does not apply to the property being documented, enter "N/A" for "not applicable." For functions, architectural classification, materials, and areas of significance, enter only categories and subcategories from the instructions. Place additional entries and narrative items on continuation sheets (NPS Form 10-900a). Use a typewriter, word processor, or computer, to complete all items.

1. Name of Property

historic name Washington Park HD (Newton MRA)

other names/site number _____

2. Location

street & number 4-97 Washington Park, 5, 15 Park Place not for publication

city or town Newton vicinity _____

state Massachusetts code MA county Middlesex code 017 zip code 02459

3. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act of 1986, as amended, I hereby certify that this ☒ nomination
☐ request for determination of eligibility meets the documentation standards for registering properties in the National Register of
Historic Places and meets the procedural and professional requirements set forth in 36 CFR Part 60. In my opinion, the property
☒ meets ☐ does not meet the National Register Criteria. I recommend that this property be considered significant
☐ nationally ☐ statewide ☒ locally. (☐ See continuation sheet for additional comments.)

Signature of certifying official/Title Brona Simon
Massachusetts Historical Commission, State Historic Preservation Officer

Date January 28, 2008

State or Federal agency and bureau _____

In my opinion, the property ☐ meets ☐ does not meet the National Register criteria. (☐ See continuation sheet for additional Comments.)

Signature of certifying official/Title _____

Date _____

State or Federal agency and bureau _____

4. National Park Service Certification

I, hereby certify that this property is:

☐ entered in the National Register

☐ See continuation sheet.

☐ determined eligible for the
National Register

☐ See continuation sheet.

☐ determined not eligible for the
National Register

☐ removed from the
National Register

☐ other (explain): _____

Signature of the Keeper _____

Date of Action _____

Name of Property

County and State

Ownership of Property

(Check only one box)

`_ object`

(Do not include previously listed resources in the count.)

— Total

Newton MRA, NR 1986, 1990

0

Craftsman

other

(Describe the historic and current condition of the property on one or more continuation sheets.)

Washington Park HD

Name of Property

Middlesex, MA

County and State

8. Statement of Significance

Applicable National Register Criteria

(Mark "x" in one or more boxes for the criteria qualifying the property for National Register listing.)

- ☒ **A** Property is associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history.
- ☐ **B** Property is associated with the lives of persons significant in our past.
- ☒ **C** Property embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction or represents the work of a master, or possesses high artistic values, or represents a significant and distinguishable entity whose components lack individual distinction.
- ☐ **D** Property has yielded, or is likely to yield, information important in prehistory or history.

Criteria Considerations

(Mark "x" in all the boxes that apply.)

Property is:

- ☐ **A** owned by religious institution or used for religious purposes.
- ☐ **B** removed from its original location.
- ☐ **C** a birthplace or grave.
- ☐ **D** a cemetery.
- ☐ **E** a reconstructed building, object, or structure.
- ☐ **F** a commemorative property.
- ☐ **G** less than 50 years of age or achieved significance within the past 50 years.

Narrative Statement of Significance

(Explain the significance of the property on one or more continuation sheets.)

9. Major Bibliographical References

(Cite the books, articles, and other sources used in preparing this form on one or more continuation sheets.)

Previous documentation on file (NPS):

- ☐ preliminary determination of individual listing (36 CFR 67) has been requested
- ☐ previously listed in the National Register
- ☐ previously determined eligible by the National Register
- ☐ designated a National Historic Landmark
- ☐ recorded by Historic American Buildings Survey # _____
- ☐ recorded by Historic American Engineering Record # _____

Areas of Significance

(Enter categories from instructions)

Architecture

Community Planning & Development

Landscape Architecture

Period of Significance

1865-1958

Significant Dates

1915 (last house built)

Significant Person

(Complete if Criterion B is marked above)

N/A

Cultural Affiliation

N/A

Architect/Builder

Dustin Lancey

Marshall S. Rice

Primary location of additional data:

- ☐ State Historic Preservation Office
- ☐ Other State agency
- ☐ Federal agency
- ☒ Local government
- ☐ University
- ☐ Other

Name of repository:

Newton History Museum

Washington Park HD
Name of Property

Middlesex, MA
County, State

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of Property _____ approx. 7 acres

UTM References See continuation sheet.

(Place additional UTM references on a continuation sheet.)

1. 19	318260	4690720	3. 19	318640	4690660
Zone	Easting	Northing	Zone	Easting	Northing
2. 19	318620	4690760	4. 19	318360	4690620
Zone	Easting	Northing	Zone	Easting	Northing

__ See continuation sheet

Verbal Boundary Description

(Describe the boundaries of the property on a continuation sheet.)

Boundary Justification

(Explain why the boundaries were selected on a continuation sheet.)

11. Form Prepared By

name/title Paul Trudeau, Katy Hax Holmes, Newton Historical Commission, with Betsy Friedberg, NR Director, MHC

organization Massachusetts Historical Commission date January 2008

street & number 220 Morrissey Boulevard telephone 617-727-8470

city or town Boston state MA zip code 02125

Additional Documentation

Submit the following items with the completed form:

Continuation Sheets

Maps

A **USGS map** (7.5 or 15 minute series) indicating the property's location.

A **sketch map** for historic districts and properties having large acreage or numerous resources.

Photographs

Representative **black and white photographs** of the property.

Additional items (Check with the SHPO or FPO for any additional items)

Property Owner

(Complete this item at the request of the SHPO or FPO.)

name multiple

street & number telephone

city or town state zip code

Paperwork Reduction Act Statement: This information is being collected for applications to the National Register of Historic Places to nominate properties for listing or determine eligibility for listing, to list properties, and to amend existing listings. Response to this request is required to obtain a benefit in accordance with the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended (16 U.S.C. 470 et seq.).

Estimated Burden Statement: Public reporting burden for this form is estimated to average 18.1 hours per response including the time for reviewing instructions, gathering and maintaining data, and completing and reviewing the form. Direct comments regarding this burden estimate or any aspect of this form to the Chief, Administrative Services Division, National Park Service, P.O. Box 37127, Washington, DC 20013-7127; and the Office of Management and Budget, Paperwork Reductions Project (1024-0018), Washington, DC 20503.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Washington Park HD (Newton MRA)
Newton (Middlesex), MA

Section number 7 Page 1

7. NARRATIVE DESCRIPTION

INTRODUCTION

Washington Park is a notable example of a mid-19th century planned residential subdivision. Located in the City of Newton, MA, just south of the village of Newtonville's commercial district, the land for this subdivision was owned and laid out in 1865 by real estate entrepreneur (and Newtonville resident) Dustin Lancey. Marshall S. Rice, town clerk in Newton from 1846 to 1873, was the surveyor for this project. The district features over two dozen historic buildings situated on both sides of an oblong, tree-lined park, which serves as a picturesque street median. Lancey's plan was successful in creating a scenic residential setting in the vein of the Parks Movement, popular locally and internationally around this time.

The visual appeal of Washington Park is enhanced by the relationship of its historic architecture to the park-like design of its greenspace. Houses are set back far enough from the road to allow for small front yards, landscaped vegetation, and pedestrian right-of-ways. There is sufficient spacing between houses to incorporate small driveways, mature trees, and picket fences. The oblong, public greenspace area, at 900 x 50 feet, is the central connecting point to the historic homes, creating a tree-lined arborway for passive recreational use. This relationship between Washington Park's built environment and planned landscaping remains true to Lancey's original vision.

Washington Park holds several examples of high style, late Victorian-era architecture (mid-to-late-19th century), including Queen Anne, Italianate, Gothic Revival, Stick, and Second Empire. Other architectural styles include early-20th century Colonial Revival and Craftsman. Buildings are mostly large, 2- to 3-story, single and multi-family houses, with one exception being the Universalist Church, currently the home of Newton's New Art Center. A variety of roof types are found, including mansard, hipped, and gabled, most having slate or asphalt shingles. Exterior walls are sheathed in wood clapboards, wood shingles, stone, or stucco. A majority of the houses in Washington Park have retained their historic materials and form, and many significant architectural details have been preserved.

All of the buildings in the National Register district exemplify a high quality of workmanship, and principal exterior facades have been spared from modern alterations or loss of historic integrity. City atlases reveal a number of exterior changes to building footprints over the last century, most occurring over 50 years ago. Recent additions have generally been sympathetic and out of the public view. Several small, historic garages are found as well, primarily examples of pre-fabricated metal garages from the 1920s and 1930s. Overall, Washington Park's architectural resources remain in excellent condition. Lancey's planned greenspace and landscaping are major contributors to the aesthetic qualities of the neighborhood. This, in combination with a brief description of its significant architectural resources, will clearly represent Washington Park's physical form and developmental history.

I. Landscaping

The central island of landscaped lawn and arborway was once the defining feature of this suburban development. Photographic evidence from 1909 shows a colonnade of young deciduous trees along the perimeter of the greensward, which enclosed a grassy lawn. When these trees were in full foliage, houses located around the island would not have been visible to each other. This rural setting was in keeping with the prevailing belief that fresh air and proximity to natural settings ensured the health and vitality of families, neighborhoods, and the economy. Many early landowner/developers in Newton such as Dustin Lancey, William Claflin, Henry F. Ross, William Jackson, Edward T. Trofitter and others, profited measurably from this concept. Thus

(continued)

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Washington Park HD (Newton MRA)
Newton (Middlesex), MA

Section number 7 Page 2

the parks movement had a devoted following in Newton as early as the 1840s, and is largely responsible for the appearance of the city today.

The relatively large urban greensward in Washington Park provided ample space for the leisurely pursuits of its residents, and was deeded to the city in 1877. Current and former residents of the 1.13-acre Washington Park recall the space used for picnics and walking, with or without pets, and the occasional game of pick-up baseball. A lifelong resident of Newtonville and former Alderman who lives on Newtonville Avenue recalled parading around the Washington Park island every spring in the late 1930s, playing his saxophone with other musicians from Underwood Elementary School.¹ The park itself has remained largely unchanged with a few exceptions – the loss of original trees to disease, the removal of original gas street lamps, and the addition of shrubs, benches, and signage thanks in part to neighborhood efforts.

The second house to be incorporated into Lancey's development plan is **79 Washington Park** (1865; **photo #3**) a two-story, three-bay house on a stone foundation with a modified, rear-facing "T" plan. It has wood-shingle cladding, a full-width front porch, and a cross-gable, asphalt-shingled roof with wide eaves and two brick end chimneys. Windows are 6/1 double-hung sash and do not appear to be original, and several window sashes have been replaced. Window casings are flat and plain, typically with thin, molded wood lintels. The front (south) façade is dominated by the full-width porch, which was likely constructed in the 20th century and has a flat roof, balustrade, and simple detailing, including a central pediment. The front doorway has a wide casing with sidelights and sits in a projecting bay, which holds an additional set of windows. Above the front porch is a large central dormer with three windows and a gabled roof.

The east elevation reveals a more asymmetrical design – a one-story wing with a low-pitched, half-hipped roof extending off the side gable, while a smaller shed-roofed wing runs towards the rear of the house. Above the shed roof is a second-floor bay window with a flat roof. A driveway runs along the east side, leading to a small, historic two-car garage with wood-shingled walls and a hipped roof. The west elevation reveals the basic elements of the original "T" plan, with uniform fenestration and a side entrance.

II. Romantic Styles

Gothic Revival

The Universalist Church at **61 Washington Park** (1873; **photo #4**) now home to the New Art Center, is the only non-residential structure in the National Register district. This 1½-story, three-bay, Gothic Revival stone building is also the largest in the district, with its rear elevation fronting Madison Avenue. Distinct architectural details include large, pointed-arch windows with ornamental stained glass, a water table, an arched front door, and a front-gable, slate-shingled roof. The roof features three bands of polychromed, hexagonal slate shingles that create a decorative pattern. With its variety of well-maintained architectural components and prominent facades, the building stands out as one of Washington Park's most impressive structures.

The building suffered a major alteration when the Hurricane of 1938 destroyed its wood belfry and steeple. However, it has retained its remaining defining architectural features. The front (south) façade is dominated by a central gabled pavilion that holds a large pointed-arch window with decorative tracery. Above this window is a smaller arched window with the same tracery design. The pavilion is flanked on the left side by a single-story bay with a lancet window and hipped roof. A concrete

(continued)

¹ Conversation with former Alderman Carlton Merrill on June 5, 2007.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Washington Park HD (Newton MRA)
Newton (Middlesex), MA

Section number 7 Page 3

ramp with metal handrail (added in 1980) extends from the sidewalk to a side entrance, providing handicapped access to the building. The right bay features the lower half of the tower, which holds the primary entranceway to the building and served as the base for the original belfry and steeple. The large, pointed-arch entranceway has elegant paneled wood doors with the same tracery design as the windows. Two narrow lancet windows are positioned directly above this entranceway on the second tier of the tower, which has a decorative metal cornice with diamond-shaped dentils. The top of the tower is capped with a flat, tar-and-gravel roof.

The west and east elevations reveal the mass and length of the building, along with later additions and several unusual architectural components. The first portion of the west elevation features the covered side entrance, which was rebuilt in 1943. It has a hipped, slate-shingle roof, supported by six wooden posts leading to a pair of paneled wood doors. This portion of the elevation also has three pointed-arch, stained glass sash windows (mimicked on the east elevation), and a concrete ramp with metal handrail leading down to an additional side entrance. The middle and rear bays were added sometime between 1875 and 1895.² The middle bay on the west elevation has a Tudor-arched side entrance with metal doors and transom, a stone beltcourse, and a small, double-hung, sash window with a quoin-patterned brick casing. A small gabled dormer sits in the steeply pitched roof. On the east side, this bay features a hipped dormer above a trio of tall, narrow, double-hung sash windows with a quoin-patterned, brick casing. The rear bay on the west elevation reveals one side of the large, gable-on-hip roof that covers the rear of the building, with the small, pedimented, gable having board and batten siding and a boxed vent. A smaller half-hipped roof is set into the larger roof directly below the gable, covering a trio of 12-paned, fixed-sash windows with stained glass transoms and thick stone sills. Below each of the windows is a set of six decorative terracotta tiles, which have sunburst and pinwheel ornamentation. These windows and tiles are encased in brick, which, along with the half-hipped roof, creates a dormer-like impression in this portion of the elevation. Two 1/1, double-hung sash windows with quoin-patterned brick casings flank the windows. The rear bay on the east elevation has the same detailing as on the west.

The rear (north) side of the building is dominated by the steeply pitched, gable-on-hip roof, and has a 1/1 double-hung sash window and four 2/2 double-hung sash windows, all with quoin-patterned brick casings. The lower portion of this elevation is lined with three basement windows (now boarded up) with large stone lintels. A rear entranceway with concrete steps and small shed roof was added in 1932, extending the existing bulkhead that covers the stairway to the basement. The entranceway has a paneled wood door with a six-paned transom, and the same quoin-patterned casing found on the building's sash windows.

Italianate

26 Washington Park (1879; **photo #7**) is one of the earliest examples of Italianate architecture in the district. This two-story, five-bay house stands on a concrete block foundation (a later alteration), and is sheathed in wood clapboard beneath an asphalt-shingled, cross-gable roof. The principal Italianate details of the building include overhanging eaves supported by pairs of ornamental brackets, tall, narrow windows, and a single-story, half-width front porch with low balustrade. Windows are typically 2/2 double-hung sash and have narrow, molded casings. The half-width porch is the dominant feature on the building's front (north) façade, having a low-hipped roof and porch posts with decorative, scroll-sawn brackets. To the right of the porch is a first-floor bay window with a bracketed, dentiled cornice, and a half-moon attic vent in the front gable. The west elevation has an identical bay window on the first floor and uniform fenestration throughout the rest of the elevation.

The east and rear elevations include several elements that give the building a modified, asymmetrical shape. The east side reveals the multiple wings of the building, each getting smaller in scale from front to back. It begins with the principal bay and

(continued)

² Newton city atlases, courtesy of the Newton History Museum

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Washington Park HD (Newton MRA)
Newton (Middlesex), MA

Section number 7 Page 4

side gable, first- and second-story windows, and a half-moon attic vent. The next bay has a single window on each floor and a continuous row of small brackets below the eaves. These brackets encircle the low-pitched gable roof that covers this wing. The rear bay is comprised of a 1915 addition with low-pitched hipped roof, built on a brick foundation. This addition has windows and cornice brackets that match the rest of the house, and a side entranceway with a front gable roof, stairway, handrail, and balustrade. The gable has a fanlight truss and features clover detailing on the vergeboards. The rear elevation offers a clearer view of the building's multiple wings and unusual form. On the right, the low-pitched gable roof that covers the smaller, middle wing (see east elevation description) is more visible, along with the 1915 addition. The left portion is dominated by the rear gabled bay that matches the principal bay on the east side, completing the cross-gable plan of the house. A centralized rear entrance with shed roof is set into the middle wing.

The building has retained many of its historic architectural features and appears to be structurally sound. It is a significant example of the early transition to high-style architecture in Washington Park, and remains a valuable resource to the neighborhood.

III. Late Victorian Styles

Second Empire

55 Washington Park (1868; **photo #5**) is one of six examples of Second Empire architecture built before 1870 in this district. The five other examples are located at **#7, 10, 37-39, 47-49 and 97 Washington Park**. This 2½-story, four-bay house was constructed on a brick foundation with wood-shingled siding and a slate-shingled mansard roof. Recent additions to the building have not altered its visual character or historic components (see below). Typical Second Empire details include the mansard roof, a wide cornice with decorative, scroll-sawn brackets below the eaves, arched dormers, and a molded cornice above and below the lower roof slope. Windows are typically 2/1 and 1/1 double-hung sash with moderately wide, molded casings. The front (south) facade is dominated by three second-floor windows and a wood clapboard, full-width enclosed porch with a low-hipped roof and a continuous row of multi-paned, fixed windows with transoms. The porch was added to the house sometime between 1895 and 1907.³ The west elevation features a pair of two-story bay windows with a rounded wood course between each floor. A small driveway runs along this side of the house, leading to a two-car garage with a hipped roof and similar materials and color as the house. The rear portion of this elevation includes a deck and covered side entrance that were most likely added in 1980s.⁴

The primary bay on the east elevation was altered by a 1991 addition. Here the owners constructed a small deck, trellis, and side entrance, and a two-story, enclosed stairway with exterior materials that match the original two-story bay window. The middle bay has a gable roof that covers the secondary wing, a narrow band of three fixed rectangular windows, and an exterior fire escape. The rear portion of this elevation reveals a smaller wing with a hipped roof and another set of rectangular windows, which are set into the cornice in order to match the middle wing windows and to create a balanced rhythm. Above this wing is a continuation of the metal egress that was part of a 1993 addition, in which a roof deck with balustrade was installed into the gable roof on the middle wing. The deck is accessed by the metal egress, which also removed a small deck and side entrance on the east elevation that were not original to the house. The rear elevation reveals better views of the smaller wing, roof deck, and metal egress. Overall, the building is in excellent condition and stands out as one of the more visually impressive structures in Washington Park.

(continued)

³ Ibid.

⁴ there is no evidence of building permits for these additions in ISD files

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Washington Park HD (Newton MRA)
Newton (Middlesex), MA

Section number 7 Page 5

Two cottage-style versions of Second Empire architecture, located at **10 Washington Park** (1870) and **97 Washington Park** (1870), are noteworthy variations of this style in this district. The two-story, wooden clapboard, mansard-roof cottage at **97 Washington Park** stands on a brick foundation and is three symmetrical bays in width. Asphalt shingle covers the sloped mansard roof, which bears three eyebrow dormers with 2/2 wooden sash windows on the front south side, as well as two on the west and east sides of identical design as the front dormers. An interior corbelled brick chimney extends from the east end of the roof. All windows are 2/2 wooden sash. The front entrance, originally built with double doors but altered in 1943 to a single door entrance, is centrally located and is flanked by half-height sidelights. In keeping with its Second Empire origins, a wide cornice band with decorative, paired wooden brackets lines the mansard roofline. Always in keeping with its original style is the single-story bracketed porch, which wraps around the house on the west and south sides. Turned wooden posts flanked by a modern balustrade support the shed roof over the porch.

Queen Anne

The Arthur H. Soden House at **5 Park Place** (1890, **photo #9**) is an exceptional example of the Queen Anne style in Washington Park. This three-story, five-bay, asymmetrical building was constructed on a stone foundation with an L-shaped floor plan. Its exterior walls consist of wood clapboards on the first floor and square-butt wood shingles on the upper floors. It has a hipped, asphalt-shingled roof with lower cross-gables. Windows are typically 1/1 double-hung sash with narrow, molded casings. The front (east) façade of the building exhibits an abundance of characteristically Colonial Revival details on this otherwise Queen Anne style house, including the prominent front gable, Palladian window, recessed second-floor porch, and large tower with bell roof. The tower rises from ground level and boasts decorative half-timbering with fanlight patterns, board and batten courses, pilasters, and pedimented dormers. A two-story bow window with a half-conical roof at the opposite corner of the façade gives the impression of a second tower. Another dominant feature on this façade is the full-width, one-story porch with decorative balustrade, classical columns, wide cornice, and central pediment over the front steps. The porch wraps around to the south façade as well. The north elevation features the large central gable with a Palladian window, wide cornice with thin bands of molding, a pedimented dormer, and a decorative, molded wood course between the first and second floors.

The west elevation is made up primarily of the rear ell, which has two pedimented dormers, Syrian-arched windows, and a three-story iron fire escape that was added in 1982. The fire escape has fanlight ornamentation that adds to the decorative elements of the house. A small one-car garage with a gable roof was built beside it in 2000 with similar materials, detailing, and colors as the house. The south elevation features a variety of architectural elements. The central portion has a large roof gable with Palladian window, second-story paired windows, and a first-floor polygonal bay window with a metal, half-conical roof. The left bay has a smaller roof gable with a Syrian-arched window, and a small, covered, side entrance. On the right portion of this elevation is a pedimented dormer and the wraparound portion of the front porch. A wide, molded cornice runs along the length of the entire elevation below the roof gables. Overall, the building is structurally sound, visually striking, and easily the most highly crafted house in Washington Park.

Stick

The Oliver B. Leavitt House at **91 Washington Park** (1870, **photo #1**) is the only example of the Stick Style in the National Register district. This 2½-story, three-bay house was built on a brick foundation with wood clapboard walls and an asphalt-shingled, front gable roof. The building's front (south) façade exhibits distinct Stick details such as the decorative "W"-style trussed gable, wide overhanging eaves with leaf-ornamented brackets, and full-width, one-story front porch with dentiled cornice, brackets, and low balustrade. The front door has a molded casing with rectangular panels. Windows on the first floor are 2/2 double-hung sash, and the upper-floor window has a Syrian arch. The second-floor window sashes have been replaced.

(continued)

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Washington Park HD (Newton MRA)
Newton (Middlesex), MA

Section number 7 Page 6

The west elevation features a large, central dormer with a conical roof. Below the dormer is a two-story bay window, which has a small pent roof with a dentilated cornice between the two floors. Two 1985 additions are visible on this façade, which were added when the building was converted to a two-family house: a three-story, spiral fire escape beside the bay window and a second-floor deck and side entrance with a covered staircase towards the rear. Below the deck is an additional side entrance with a wood handrail and a bracketed, half-hipped roof. A small driveway runs along this side of the house, leading to a prefabricated garage that was added in 1925. The east façade has a one-story bay window with narrow sashes and a dentilated cornice, three double-hung sash windows, and a dormer with a pent roof. This building is another significant example of early high-style designs in Washington Park, and remains in excellent condition.

Colonial Revival

40 Washington Park (1890, **photo #6**) stands out as an excellent example of the architectural transition from Queen Anne to the Colonial Revival style. This 2½-story, four-bay house was built on a brick foundation, is sheathed in wooden shingles, and has a cross-gable, asphalt-shingled gambrel roof. The building's size and asymmetrical shape exemplify the Queen Anne-influenced transition to Colonial Revival in late 19th century American architecture. Windows are typically 2/2 double-hung sash with narrow, molded casings, and eyebrow lintels, typically a Shingle Style feature, are found on all gable windows. A narrow strip of copper eave flashing encircles the building above the dentiled cornice.

The front (north) façade features a variety of architectural elements, such as the half-width porch with simple Classical detailing and oval window, wide cornice with corner brackets below the prominent front gable, bay window with half-hipped roof, and pedimented dormers. A rounded bay at the western edge exhibits the principal Queen Anne influence on the building. The east elevation features the prominent cross-gable with identical detailing as the front gable, a first-floor oriel window, and a 1998 one-story addition. The west elevation reveals uniform fenestration below the large gable, which has paired windows and a flared edge that does not extend to the cornice. An additional window sits below the flared edge. The rear elevation features two gabled roof dormers, a metal fire escape that was added in 1986, and a better view of the 1998 addition. This addition has a gable roof, fish-scale wood shingles in the gable end, a tall paired window, skylight, and a screened-in porch under a shed roof which extends from the gable end. The left portion of this elevation reveals a two-story bow window with a wide, dentilated cornice. A small two-car garage, built in 1998 and sheathed in wooden shingles, has a gambrel roof and is located behind the house.

The Walter J. Paine House at **18 Washington Park** (1898, **photo #8**) is an example of Craftsman-style detailing. This 2½-story, three-bay house was built on a stone foundation with wood-shingle sheathing and an asphalt-shingled hip roof. Windows are typically 1/1 double-hung sash with thin molded casings. A narrow, slightly cantilevered, saw-toothed shingled cornice and a thin, molded wood course visually divides the first and second floors. The building's wide, overhanging eaves with exposed roof rafters exemplify the Craftsman style.

The front (north) façade is dominated by a half-width porch with a hipped roof, exposed rafters, and porch posts that support decorative, scroll-sawn brackets and arched woodwork. To the right of the porch roof is a small window with a pent roof supported by two decorative brackets. To the left of the porch is a large fixed window with a stained-glass transom. Above the porch is a pair of fixed lattice windows with arched frames. Another distinguishing feature on this façade is the large, gabled roof dormer with diamond-patterned wood shingles, which also have a bracketed pent roof that covers four small lattice windows. An identical dormer is found on the east side, along with two first-floor bay windows with a sloping, half-hipped metal roof.

(continued)

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Washington Park HD (Newton MRA)
Newton (Middlesex), MA

Section number 7 Page 7

The west elevation reveals three asymmetrical bays with architectural elements that lend themselves to the Craftsman influence on the house. The first portion has a two-story bay window with half-hipped roof and slightly flared base. The middle bay is recessed and has a centralized side entrance with a molded door casing. Above the door is another small, bracketed pent roof, and a pair of tall, stained-glass windows with transoms and a bracketed eyebrow lintel. The rear bay has a second-story overhang with a double-hung sash window and two wood-shingled brackets at each corner. The rear elevation has an enclosed porch with stairway on the right side, a tripartite window on the left, and a single dormer.

Both of these Colonial Revival houses are in excellent condition and are significant examples of late-19th century building styles in Washington Park – the last phase of new construction in the district. Three two-family houses were constructed on the last remaining lots between 1912-1915 (**8, 9, and 11 Washington Park**), and in keeping with the neighborhood's trend towards building in the period's popular form, all three are variations of the Colonial Revival style with Craftsman details.

The two-family house constructed at **27-29 Washington Park** (1914) has a symmetrical appearance and is designed in the Colonial Revival style, with Craftsman style elements. The end-gable, wooden clapboard house rises two and a half stories above a granite block foundation and is three bays in width. The west and east sides are four bays, with a two-bay screened porch added to the rear north side. Exposed rafters on the west and east sides, and decorative, pyramidal end-caps along the front end-gable, trim the asphalt-shingled roof. A corbelled brick chimney rises from the center of the roof. A squared, paneled, projecting bay centered over the entrance has a shed roof with exposed rafter ends and contains a tripartite window. Another bay of this design is located on the west side, second story, of the house. Three dormers on the west slope of the roof and two end-gable dormers on the east slope also have exposed rafter ends. The center dormer on the west slope is sheathed in natural shingle, and has a shed roof covering paired windows, the middle of which has diamond panes. Flanking dormers on the west slope are gabled and sheathed in patterned stucco. A latticed, open portico covers the central entrance and has a slightly arched roof supported by squared posts with simple caps. Windows on the house are 1/1 replacements, with the exception of two stained-glass windows flanking a raised brick chimney on the east side. This chimney rises in front of the first of two end-gable dormers on the east façade, suggesting that the chimney and the flanking windows were a later addition. A shed-roofed enclosed entrance on the west side opens to the south, also a later addition.

Archaeological Description

While no ancient Native American sites are known in the Washington Park district, sites may exist. Four ancient sites are known in the general area (within one mile). In general, however, there is a low potential for locating Native American sites in the district. Environmental characteristics of the district do not represent locational criteria (slope, soil drainage, proximity to wetlands) that are favorable for the presence of ancient sites. While level to moderately sloping topography is common in the district, much of that topography has been landscaped, and natural soil conditions, including drainage characteristics, have been obscured by urban residential development. The nearest freshwater wetlands are also located well over 1,000 feet from the district, a factor that reduces the overall ancient site sensitivity for this area. Residential development, landscaping, utilities, and roadways would have destroyed any ancient sites that were located in the area.

(continued)

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places

Continuation Sheet

Washington Park HD (Newton MRA)
Newton (Middlesex), MA

Section number 7 Page 8

A low to moderate potential also exists for the recovery of historic archaeological resources in the district. Historic land use has not been demonstrated in this area prior to the 1840s, when residential lots were laid out in the district. The Washington Park planned residential subdivision was designed in 1865. Most construction in the area took place from the 1870s to the 1890s, and all residences from the period apparently still survive. When first established, Washington Park included five existing residences and a school at the corner of Washington Park and Walnut Street. Only two of these structures are extant today: one building at 79 Washington Park (ca. 1865) and the other at 85-87 Washington Park (ca. 1855). Among the five residences and school listed above, two extant residences and the school site were included in the eastern portion of the National Register-listed Newtonville Historic District (NRDIS 1986, 1990). Three existing houses present by ca. 1865 were replaced by mid-to-late 20th century houses and not included in this nomination. Barns, outbuildings and occupational-related features (trash pits, privies wells) may survive with extant utilitarian homes of the area's farmers and workers; however, except for barns, stables, and outbuildings, similar archaeological resources are unlikely with the district's more elaborate, later 19th century houses. Washington Park has remained relatively unchanged with few exceptions. Post-hole and structural evidence may survive from the original gas street lamps that illuminated Washington Park. All lamps were removed and their locations were not documented.

(end)

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Washington Park HD (Newton MRA)
Newton (Middlesex), MA

Section number 8 Page 1

8. NARRATIVE STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

INTRODUCTION

Washington Park is a historic residential neighborhood in the city of Newton, Massachusetts, a relatively affluent suburban community directly west of Boston. Located south of the commercial center of the village of Newtonville, one of 12 villages in Newton, the neighborhood is a notable example of a mid- to late-19th century planned subdivision with design elements influenced by the Urban Parks Movement. Washington Park, which is also the official city street name, extends the length of one city block, bordered on the west by Walnut Street and the east by Harvard Avenue, and the north and south by Madison and Cabot Streets. The Washington Park National Register Historic District encompasses approximately two-thirds of the block, and is comprised of 27 single- and multi-family houses situated along both sides of a narrow, oblong greensward. The neighborhood is representative of early development patterns in Newtonville, which saw a transition from its predominately agricultural roots to a more residential-based community in the 1840s and 1850s. It holds a variety of well-preserved, highly crafted architectural resources. Washington Park falls within the context of the Newton Multiple Resource Area 1636-1907 (NR 1986) and the 20th century expansion of the Multiple Resource Area to 1940 (NR 1990). The district qualifies for the National Register of Historic Places under Criteria A for its influence on community planning and development in Newtonville, and under Criteria C for its significant architecture and landscaping.

WASHINGTON PARK HISTORY AND SIGNIFICANCE

The City of Newton began as a sparsely populated agrarian community in the 17th century, with its multiple-village form having taken shape by the early 19th century. This was due in part to the construction of the Worcester Turnpike in 1808 and the Boston & Worcester Railroad in 1834, which provided greater access to Newton from Boston and other areas. While the villages of Auburndale, West Newton, and Newton Corner developed into residential communities early in the 19th century, Newtonville remained a predominantly rural community. This began to change, however, with the formation of the Boston & Albany railroad in 1834 and the increased service to Newtonville that followed. Local businessmen and developers quickly took notice of this opportunity, and residential lots were laid out as early as the 1840s. The majority of construction on these lots, though, actually took place from 1870 to 1890. Newtonville's rural setting and location was also appealing to less affluent families, which helped establish a variety of working, middle, and upper-class residents in the village.¹ By the end of this period, Newtonville had achieved its current appearance of a thriving, somewhat densely populated community of moderately sized, middle-class homes.

Origins of Washington Park

Dustin Lancey, a real estate entrepreneur and Newtonville resident, established Washington Park in 1865 following a very similar development pattern, if in a different form, to other Newtonville subdivisions. Lancey's plan included 31 deep, spacious lots surrounding a long, oval park. This kind of residential "pocket park" was already found in other parts of Newtonville, including Walnut Park, Waban Park, Kenrick Park (on NR), Sylvan Heights, Islington Park, Elmwood Park, and others.

Dustin Lancey, born in Brookline, New Hampshire, in 1822, was actively involved in the second phase of suburban development in Newton in the 1860s and 1870s. He married Louisa A. Treat in Waltham, Massachusetts, in 1845. According to the 1860 census, Lancey's occupation was 'carpenter' and he lived with his family in Newtonville, in a home on Washington Street at the corner of Central Avenue. The house has since been demolished. In 1890 he had an office on Milk Street in Boston and worked in real estate. By 1902, he lived in a house still standing at 161 Lowell Avenue, and which is included in the Newtonville Local Historic District. Lancey died there the same year.

(continued)

¹ Historic Newton, Inc., et. al., *Newton's 19th Century Architecture: Newtonville*, 3.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Washington Park HD (Newton MRA)
Newton (Middlesex), MA

Section number 8 Page 2

By the time Lancey came to live in Newtonville in the mid 1840s, a distinct village setting was in place and included churches and stores. A high school, the first in Newton, was built in 1859 on Walnut Street near the current site of Newton North High School. Lancey's plan was to build a contemporary suburban interpretation of the centerpiece-garden developments constructed elsewhere in Newton. His work emulated that of Alexander Wadsworth, and may also have been influenced by earlier residential developments of similar design in the Back Bay and Beacon Hill in Boston.

Lancey subdivided another parcel of land in Newtonville four years later at the intersection of Crafts Street and Lowell Avenue. He created 20 house lots, most of which were developed with homes that are now contributing resources in the Newtonville Local Historic District. Situated around a small oval greensward, the east end of Prescott Street mirrors Washington Park but on a much smaller scale. Lancey also constructed a grassy triangular island at the west end of Prescott, known today as Lowell Park, as part of this subdivision.

Suburban Development in Newton

The greensward in Washington Park represents a continuation of a trend begun in Newton over twenty years earlier by surveyor Alexander Wadsworth (1806-1898), a trained civil engineer from Hiram, Maine. Wadsworth moved to Boston in 1825 and launched a successful career in surveying, particularly on projects in Massachusetts such as Mt. Auburn Cemetery (1831) in Cambridge, the Harmony Grove Cemetery (1839) in Salem, and the Woodland Cemetery in Chelsea (1850). Wadsworth was also a first cousin of the poet Henry Wadsworth Longfellow. During the 1840s, when Lancey first arrived in Newton, Wadsworth was busy surveying the following suburban developments there in the mid to late 1840s: Walnut Park (the first in Newton and his first with William Jackson, in 1844, and believed to be where the central oval greenspace idea first appeared in Newton); Webster Park (1844); Kenrick Park (1845), Sylvan Heights (1849), and Islington Park (ca.1850), as well as other small, unnamed residential developments in the city such as the Richardson subdivision (1850). In Boston, Wadsworth had already been commissioned to survey Dawes Wharf (1833), and Pemberton Square on Beacon Hill (1835).

The earliest suburban developments laid out by Wadsworth in Newton were primarily for wealthy families who lived and worked in Newton. With few exceptions, original homeowners in Washington Park were tradesmen with offices in Boston. All of the Newton subdivisions surveyed by Wadsworth consisted of small parcels of land surrounding a small oval, or lozenge-shaped island of greenspace. Though Wadsworth was commissioned by a variety of landowners to survey their developments, his layouts, at least in Newton, are remarkably similar in appearance. It is not immediately clear whether Wadsworth devised this design scheme on his own, or if he incorporated outside influences in his layouts. It is worth mentioning that one of his early projects, thought to have been completed before he began work at Mount Auburn Cemetery, was Belvidere Village, a site he surveyed for a residential district in Lowell, Massachusetts. This plan featured a formal square of house lots surrounding a central, ovate park ringed with trees and named Washington Square.²

As one of the earliest directors in Wadsworth's career, Henry A.S. Dearborn laid out the first roads and paths in Mount Auburn Cemetery and may have strongly influenced Wadsworth's work. Louisburg Square in Beacon Hill, first designed in 1826 and built in the late 1830s, and the Boston Public Gardens, established in 1837, were also well known local contributions to the Urban Parks movement in Boston and would have been known to Wadsworth early on. Clearly, Marshall S. Rice, the surveyor for Washington Park, had many prior examples upon which to base his subdivision design. Park-style subdivisions can still be found in West Newton, Newtonville, Newton Corner, and Auburndale, but few retain the historic integrity of setting and

(continued)

² Birnbaum, Charles A. and Fix, Julie K, eds. Pioneers of American Landscape Design II: An Annotated Bibliography

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Washington Park HD (Newton MRA)
Newton (Middlesex), MA

Section number 8 Page 3

architecture as Washington Park. All of these suburban park developments were small in scale and tended to correspond to the boundaries of private land and their proximity to the rail lines. In this way, each park development is somewhat unique, though all were oriented toward use by railroad commuters into Boston. Washington Park stands out as a well-preserved example of a suburban park particular to the Boston-area suburbs during this period.

The fact that Lancey was able to design a large subdivision like Washington Park on vacant land close to the railroad shows Newtonville's gradual transition from an agrarian community to a suburban village. Washington Park represents a major phase of this transition and it had a strong influence on future greenspace designs in Newtonville and other parts of Newton, today known as the "Garden City." Early parks in Newtonville, including Linwood Park, Elmwood Park, and Cabot Park, were "initiated on a small scale with the creation of residential greens strips such as Washington Park."³

As noted earlier, while many subdivisions were laid out as early as the 1860s, by and large construction did not take off in the area until the mid 1870s. Washington Park was no exception, and the delay between its initial development and the construction of its houses illustrates another difference between the development of Newtonville and its surrounding villages. Earlier developments in Auburndale and West Newton Hill had centered on large, spacious lots and small estates, but by the late-19th century development trends had shifted to smaller, more densely packed neighborhoods which catered to the growing number of middle-class Bostonians escaping the confines of the city. Largely undeveloped Newtonville became a prime location for these moderately sized houses.

By 1874, all of the lots in the Washington Park development were sold. One large parcel on the 1865 map, labeled as No. 14 and encompassing most of the northern segment of Laundry Brook east of Washington Park, was not subdivided as part of Lancey's original plan. This parcel was subdivided by 1874, however, and had numerous lots laid out around two new roads, Norwood Avenue and Clarendon Court, located between Newtonville Street and Cabot Street. It is not clear whether Lancey was responsible for subdividing these new lots. When construction began about ten years later at Washington Park, the new landowners began subdividing their own lots to profit from the booming demand for housing near the railroad, creating greater housing density in Washington Park. Lots were subdivided both vertically and horizontally, and in some cases, new roads or lanes were laid out to connect Washington Park with Cabot Street to the south, including: Park Place (1888); Cloelia Terrace (ca.1890); Dale Street (1907); and Simpson Terrace (ca.1905). In addition, between 1865 and 1874, Sullivan Road, now known as Madison Avenue, made a horizontal cut through the northern portion of Lancey's original layout, thereby reducing the lot sizes of those parcels and completely isolating one undeveloped parcel on the south side of Madison Avenue.

Another discontinuous parcel on the northeast corner of the intersection of Cabot and Lincoln (now Harvard) Streets, near Laundry Brook, was also platted on the 1865 plan. This parcel no longer conforms to the proposed lot lines of the original subdivision. Based on a comparison of the square footage stated on the original subdivision plan and the combined square footage of the lots in the area, this area now encompasses approximately five lots between Harvard Street and Clarendon Street – two facing Harvard Street, two facing Cabot Street, and a fifth lot that appears to belong to 116 Harvard Street and holds a small garage/shed. Since there is slightly more square footage in the original subdivision than in the existing lots, it is also possible that the lot originally extended into Clarendon Street as well. While the park-centered neighborhood was retained, nearly half the land in the original subdivision was no longer associated with Washington Park. For this reason, the boundaries of the district reflect the neighborhood as constructed and will not strictly follow the 1865 subdivision plan.

(continued)

³ Historic Newton, Inc., et. al., *Newton's 19th Century Architecture: Newtonville*, 17.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Washington Park HD (Newton MRA)
Newton (Middlesex), MA

Section number 8 Page 4

Urban Parks Movement

In the 1840s, and in partnership with Wadsworth and other notable local surveyors, numerous landowners in the city were responsible for launching the Urban Parks Movement in Newton, as prominent residents began setting aside tracts of land to preserve them as park areas.⁴ This international movement was fueled by intellectual and economic energy devoted to the creation of an ideal, where the “healthy virtues of the country could be captured within an urban setting.”⁵ The international roots for this movement are believed to have grown from the then well-known Pere Lachaise cemetery, established in 1804 near Paris. Designed in response to crowded churchyards and overpopulated crypts, the natural setting of this cemetery struck a chord with urban-weary residents of European cities and abroad. This movement manifested itself in Newton during the 1840s, when Wadsworth translated his experience as a cemetery surveyor into neighborhood planning and made a lasting mark on Newton’s housing landscape.

Not long after, the Grove Hill Cemetery, now known as Newton Cemetery, was laid out by Marshall Rice and completed in 1855, under the care of Henry Ross, uncle of Henry F. Ross. On a national level, the landscape architect Frederick Law Olmstead and partner Calvert Vaux’s designs for Central Park in New York City in 1859 popularized the concept of creating public spaces for passive recreation across the country. Olmstead then brought aesthetically pleasing public recreation areas to Boston with his plans for the Emerald Necklace in the early 1880s. Newton residents took notice, and in 1885 Farlow Park, located in Newton Corner, became the city’s first designated public park. Perhaps coincidentally, the term “Garden City” became widely used by Newton residents during this period to describe their city in speeches and promotional literature. By the late 1890s, each of Newton’s villages had at least one neighborhood park or playground.

Universalist Society of Newtonville

Washington Park’s greenspace offered a feeling of closeness with nature in a contained residential setting, with its long rows of trees on either side of the park providing a shady, picturesque environment. This setting was selected by the founders of the Universalist Society of Newtonville as ideal for their new church.

The Universalist Society of Newtonville was organized by former members of two pre-existing societies in the area: the Newton Watertown Universalist Society, and the Watertown Universalist Society, both of which grew from the earliest Unitarian activities in Newton in the 1840s. The first meeting of this new society took place in a small hall over Williams Drug Store in Newtonville Square in 1871. The group of thirteen members became a legally organized society in April of that year, and soon purchased a parcel of land overlooking the greenspace in Washington Park for their church at **61 Washington Park** (1873, photo #4). The corner stone was laid October 22, 1872, and dedicated in June the following year. In October 1884, a parish house was added to the north side of the church for the third pastor of this church, Rev. Rufus A. White. Funding for this addition was raised locally through town fairs. The Newton Junior College occupied this building at the time of the Hurricane of 1938, when it lost its steeple. In 1977, the New Arts Center moved into the building and has occupied it since.

There were undoubtedly residents of Washington Park who attended this neighborhood church when it opened in 1873, but only one of the original homeowners in this development, Edward T. Trofitter of **46-48 Washington Park** (1884) and **50-52 Washington Park** (1886), appears in documentation from the period as an early member, and its first deacon. Trofitter bought the land for his two houses by 1874, but did not subdivide and erect buildings there until the 1880s. Prior to occupying his home at **46-48 Washington Park** in 1884, Trofitter lived at the corner of Otis and Walnut Streets in Newtonville. Henry F. Ross, owner of **40 Washington Park** (1890, **photo #8**) and owner of land next door to Trofitter, became a deacon at

(continued)

⁴ Historic Newton, Inc., et. al., *Newton’s 19th Century Architecture: Newtonville*, 17.

⁵ Campbell, Robert. “Forgotten Utopias.” *Boston Globe*. May 21, 1995.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Washington Park HD (Newton MRA)
Newton (Middlesex), MA

Section number 8 Page 5

the Universalist Church near the turn of the 20th century. At least two original building owners in this development were active members of other churches in the area. Otis E. Hunt, a physician, moved to **33 Washington Park** (1890) ca.1890, and was a member of Grace Episcopal Church. James W. Kimball, a resident of **73 Washington Park** (1875) as of 1875 and a former five-term mayor of Newton, worshipped at the Central Congregational Church.

Original Landowners in Washington Park

Though William Claflin, former governor of Massachusetts from 1869-71, was not an original homeowner in Washington Park, he did purchase one of its oldest pre-existing homes at **85-87 Washington Park** (1855, **photo #2**) with his friend Dustin Lancey in 1874. The earliest owner of record for this house was Thomas Hurd, a carpenter, who lived at the house until at least 1871. Claflin was a very successful landowner, developer, and lawyer in Newtonville, having lived with his family since 1855 in "The Old Elms" House, formerly on Walnut Street on the grounds of what is now Newton North High School. The Claflin School, built across the street from his former home at the corner of Washington Park and Walnut Streets, was built largely in response to his efforts to erect an elementary school in Newtonville. Claflin is also credited with constructing what was likely the first apartment building in Newton in 1887 on Walnut Terrace in Newtonville. He also represented the Republican Party in the state legislature from 1853-59, served as senate president in 1861, and was elected lieutenant governor from 1866-68 before serving as governor.

By 1874, almost half of the 22 landowners in Washington Park had offices in Boston. At least ten more of these owners are recorded as either having boarded in or owned homes in eastern Massachusetts prior to owning land in Washington Park, and of these, most previously resided elsewhere in Newtonville. Of the 22 original landowners, four bought multiple house lots in the district for what appears to be speculative reasons. Arthur H. Soden, operator of his own roofing business in Boston and owner of the Boston National League baseball team, bought adjoining lots at **47-49 Washington Park** (1868) and **55 Washington Park** (1868, **photo #5**) and built a mansard-style home on each. In 1890, after Park Place was laid as a connector road to Cabot Street, Soden purchased lots at **5 and 15 Park Place** (both 1890, **photo #9**) and constructed two Queen Anne Style homes. He moved into the house at **5 Park Place** from a former home at 218 Walnut Street, Newtonville. James Sherman, an insurance agent who lived on Newtonville Avenue prior to moving to Washington Park, owned two lots at the east end of the district and is credited with building the high-style Second Empire-style house at **7 Washington Park** (1870), and the Italianate-style house at **15-17 Washington Park** (1870).

David S. Simpson, a blacksmith who worked in Boston and also formerly lived on Newtonville Avenue, owned one lot in his own name and appears to have owned four more with a partner named Grigg. This was likely to have been Joseph W. Grigg, seller of slates, mantels, and finished stone work, who lived on Otis Street in Newtonville in the late 1870s. All of his and Simpson's lots were located at the east end of Washington Park, but by 1874 only one of their lots, **10 Washington Park** (1870) was developed. In city directories, David S. Simpson was listed as an occupant of this home, but not until 1883. By 1907, all of their lots, with the exception of what is now 3 Washington Park, were subdivided.

In 1874, the south side of Washington Park featured the largest lots of the subdivision. By 1907, all but two of these lots were subdivided. The two that remained intact are the current site of condominiums, which are not included in the historic district boundary.

Beginning at the east end of the district, Robert L. Young, a draughtsman, lived at **4 Washington Park** (1900) on land originally owned by Simpson and Grigg. Walter J. Paine, an architect, resided in Newtonville before occupying **18 Washington Park** (1898, **photo #8**), and worked in an office in Boston. It is not known whether he designed this house. George B. Smith worked as a salesman in Boston lived at **26 Washington Park** (1874, **photo #7**). Rhoderic D. Morehouse, a

(continued)

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Washington Park HD (Newton MRA)
Newton (Middlesex), MA

Section number 8 Page 6

clothing merchant in Boston, boarded elsewhere in Newtonville while owning land on Washington Park in 1874. By 1885, Morehouse moved into the house on his lot, at **32 Washington Park** (1885). In 1874, Leon C. Carter, a wholesale hardware dealer, owned the house at 64 Washington Park, as well as the adjacent lot on the west side. The house at #64 is no longer standing, and is now the site of one of the two condominium buildings mentioned above. By 1907, the vacant lot upon which **#70 and 74** stand was subdivided to the south, and Carter kept the two southernmost lots located on Park Place. Marie A. Alary and Catherine A. Shedd, widows, were neighbors at **70 and 74 Washington Park** (1888), respectively, though Shedd moved in three years before Alary in 1885.

The north side of Washington Park had smaller lots and was more densely developed by 1874. Lot sizes remained intact until just before 1917, when descendants of the Simpson and Sherman families subdivided their lots on the east end of Washington Park. The resulting lots were purchased by three land speculators: John T. Burns and Sons (**21 Washington Park**, 1912), F.A. & H.S. Horn (**25 (23) Washington Park**, 1915), and E.F. Goodridge (**27-29 Washington Park**, 1914). All three homes, when built between 1912 and 1914, were occupied by tenants and represented the last phase of development in the Park. Nathaniel Hartwell and Ethelbert Parker, both Boston commuters with families, moved in to **21 Washington Park** by 1913. By 1919, Samuel Wood and William G. Wilkins, a photographer and optical goods merchant respectively, occupied **25 (23) Washington Park**. Also in that year, Frank D. Lord, a building contractor, and Cornelius C. Connor, an electrical engineer, moved in to **27-29 Washington Park**.

An early resident of this north side was Dr. Charles W. Taylor, a physician and owner of the house at **97 Washington Park** (1870). Prior to moving to this house in 1871, he lived at the corner of Walnut and Washington Streets in Newtonville. His former neighbor before 1870, Oliver B. Leavitt, became his neighbor again when Leavitt moved to **91 Washington Park** (1870, **photo #1**) in 1871. Leavitt was in the stoves, tinware, and metals business with a shop at the corner of Walnut and Washington. Alexander Chisholm, listed in the directory as a 'helper' to Oliver B. Leavitt, owned the house at **79 Washington Park** (1865, **photo #3**) as of 1874, and still resided there in 1889. By 1907 this lot was subdivided on the north side.

William H. Studley, a merchant tailor who worked in Boston, owned one of the largest lots on the north side at **37-39 Washington Park** (1869). Two homes were built on the lot as of 1907 but the land was not formally subdivided until after 1917. The second house has an address of **33 Washington Park** (1890) and was built approximately 20 years after **#39**.

ARCHITECTURAL SIGNIFICANCE

Because the actual house construction along Washington Park took place gradually, the neighborhood exhibits a wide range of 19th-century housing styles, demonstrating the prevailing styles at different points in time. When first established, Washington Park included five existing residences and a school lot at the corner of Washington Park and Walnut Street. Today, only two of these structures remain – 79 Washington Park (ca. 1865, **photo map #3**) and 85-87 Washington Park (ca. 1855, **photo map #2**), two very different, astylistic buildings that are both fairly modest in size and scale and are good examples of the pre-Victorian development of the village. The six houses that were completed before 1870, after the subdivision was created, are strikingly different structures – for the most part substantial, 2½ -story Second Empire-style buildings with bellcast mansard roofs. The shift from the utilitarian houses of the area's farmers and workers to the elaborately detailed houses of fashion-conscious, urban businessmen represents the most striking architectural change in the neighborhood.

(continued)

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Washington Park HD (Newton MRA)
Newton (Middlesex), MA

Section number 8 Page 7

While half of the eight houses built in the late 1870s are Second Empire in style, only one, at **73 Washington Park** (1875), is similar in form and roof style to the 1860s construction. The remaining Second Empire buildings are both more elaborately detailed and unusual in form, including the area's most ornate example at **7 Washington Park** (1870), complete with a corner tower topped with ornate iron railings, as well as two cottage-style examples, **10 and 97 Washington Park** (1870), which are smaller versions of the style. The remaining structures built in this period include the neighborhood's only Stick Style structure, at **91 Washington Park** (1870, **photo #1**), and its only non-residence, the Gothic Revival former Universalist Church, now a neighborhood arts center at **61 Washington Park** (1873, **photo #4**). Despite its change in use, the church is still a remarkably intact example of the style with the exception of its missing steeple, which was torn off during the Hurricane of 1938. Rounding off the houses built in this period are two examples of the Italianate style, at **15-17 Washington Park** (1870) and **26 Washington Park** (1879, **photo #7**), which are modestly sized but well-detailed structures that have retained their defining architectural features.

The short trend towards a variety of styles disappeared in the 1880s, when the Queen Anne style became widely popular. While one Italianate style residence was built in this period, **46 Washington Park** (1884), the remaining houses (**#s 32, 50-52, 70, and 74 Washington Park**) are all variations of the Queen Anne form. All four houses are fairly simple examples of the form, which share common decorative features, but in keeping with the asymmetrical style of these structures, no two are quite alike. The neighborhood's largest and most elaborate Queen Anne building was built in the early 1890s at **5 Park Place** (1890, **photo #9**) – a typical 2½-story structure complete with a high hip roof with gabled end dormers, round turrets at each corner, a full-width, wraparound porch, and decorative shingle work. Two more examples of the style, **15 Park Place** (1890) and **33 Washington Park** (1890), were also built in the 1890s. While both have clear Queen Anne elements either in their form (**#33**) or detailing (**#15**), both also exhibit architectural elements found in the increasingly popular Colonial Revival style. Similarly, **18 Washington Park** (1898, **photo #6**) also has an asymmetrical, almost Queen Anne, form but has clear Colonial Revival features in its gambrel roof, pedimented dormers, and porch post railings. Additionally, both **4 Washington Park** (1900) and **40 Washington Park** (1890, **photo #8**) have Craftsman details in their wide, flat eaves (**#4**) and exposed rafters (**#40**).

By the end of the 19th century, Washington Park was nearly complete. Between 1912 and 1915, the last three residential buildings in the neighborhood were constructed on land originally owned by David Simpson and his descendants. All three were designed in the Colonial Revival style and were constructed as multi-family buildings by non-resident owners. Two of the three houses, at **21 Washington Park** (1912) and **25 (23) Washington Park** (1915), are early examples of what may now be recognized as fairly typical working class, two-family structures with minimal decorative detail but in overall style and form, are clearly Colonial Revival. The house at **21 Washington Park**, the earliest of the three, is cross-gable in form, with two open porches filling the ell formed by the cross-gable plan. A shallow two-story bay window projection forms the first bay on the two-bay west façade. The house at **25 (23) Washington Park** was the third to be built in 1915, and also has open porches with squared posts, balustrade, and two-story projecting bays, but they are arranged differently. This house rises two stories beneath a hipped roof and a central, shallow-gabled dormer with paired six-pane windows. The front façade has a two-story, three-sided bay window projection, and two stacked, open porches spanning most of the front façade.

Though commuter train service continued to draw residents to this neighborhood, the widespread ownership of automobiles in the early 20th century brought another wave of building activity to Washington Park. Nearly 30% of its owners constructed detached or attached garages on their properties in the first decades of the 20th century and forever changed the landscape of houses in Washington Park. All those detached garages constructed within the period of significance are contributing elements in the district. (Several freestanding garages that postdate the end of the period of significance, however, are noncontributing.)

(continued)

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Washington Park HD (Newton MRA)
Newton (Middlesex), MA

Section number 8 Page 8

Washington Park in the mid 20th and early 21st century

Despite later alterations and additions, nearly all the houses on Washington Park have retained their original materials and distinctive architectural features. The influx of Boston commuters to this neighborhood over the years has helped to establish its strong middle class roots, and houses here are, on the whole, well maintained. The transition from gas-powered lighting to electricity also brought changes to the greensward where the glare of streetlights and processions of telephone poles transformed its bucolic setting. Neighborhood efforts to reverse this trend in the past decade have begun to restore the natural setting envisioned by Lancey and others before him.

The park has been without shade trees for some time. A long-time resident of Washington Park (Nancy Muller, resident of 94 Harvard Street, in a conversation on June 8, 2007) recalled that the Hurricane of 1938 took many of the shade trees, with the rest being lost over time to disease and lack of maintenance. In 2001, a group of neighbors formed a nonprofit organization, known as Park Friends, Inc., to address the failing conditions of the greensward and to raise money to partially restore it. This group successfully acquired Community Preservation Act (CPA) funding to plant trees and flowers, add an irrigation system, and provide appropriate trash receptacles for the greenspace. It was also through the initial efforts of this group that this National Register nomination for Washington Park was written. Young dogwoods, maple trees, and a few mature conifers now stand along the greensward, and new benches, signs, and landscaped sitting areas anchor it at either end.

With the exception of one historic 1909 photo showing a single gas lamppost on the greensward, no other historic evidence has been found to indicate where more lampposts may have stood. It is not known whether oil lanterns were used there before gas. Due again to the efforts of Park Friends, Inc., electrical lampposts of cast iron, manufactured to match the original gas lampposts in style, have been installed at regular intervals along the greensward. The City of Newton agreed to remove the modern lighting that had been installed along the greensward, but in so doing asked that the new lampposts meet current lighting code provisions. As a result, there are likely more lampposts on the greensward today than there were originally.

Archaeological Significance

Historic archaeological resources described above may contribute important information related to the development patterns of Newton, Newtonville, and the Washington Park Historic District, which saw a transition from predominantly rural community with agricultural roots to a more residential-based community by the mid 19th century. Additional documentary research combined with detailed analysis of the contents of occupational-related features and structural evidence of outbuildings and barns may contribute important evidence related to patterns of urbanization in the Newton and Greater Boston locale. Important evidence may exist on the district's shift from the utilitarian houses of the area's farmers and workers to the elaborately detailed houses of fashion-conscious urban businessmen. The contents of occupational-related features may contribute important social, cultural, and economic information on the changing social structure of the town and district from the mid 19th through the 20th century. Historical and archaeological resources may also contribute important information related to the planning and growth of one of the earlier mid-19th century planned residential subdivisions in Massachusetts, designed in 1865.

(end)

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

Washington Park HD (Newton MRA)
Newton (Middlesex), MA

Section number 9 Page 1

9. MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

Birnbaum, Charles A. FASLA; Karson, Robin. Pioneers of American Landscape Design. New York: The McGraw-Hill Companies, 2000.

Cobb, Nathan. "Presentation to the Newton Historical Commission for Designation of Washington Park in Newtonville as a Historically Significant Place, as Eligible for Listing on the State Register of Historic Places, and as a Listing on the National Register of Historic Places." Unpublished report on file at the Department of Planning & Development, City of Newton, MA, April 2004.

Emmet, Alan. House and Garden Magazine, "*Field Trip: Heaven on Earth*." Pps. 116-118, 186. April 2007.

The Generations Network, Inc. www.ancestry.com. Copyright 2007.

Harvey, Bree. "*Map Quest: Alexander Wadsworth (1806-1898)*." Excerpt from Winter 2007 edition of *Sweet Auburn*. Revised: January 25, 2007, WCC.

Historic Newton, et. Al. *Newton's 19th Century Architecture: Newtonville*. Newton, MA: Department of Planning & Development, 1980.

Jenkins, Candace, et. Al. "Newton Multiple Resource Area, Newton, Massachusetts." National Register of Historic Places Nomination Form, on file at the Department of Planning & Development, City of Newton, MA, May 1986.

Krim, Arthur. "*An Early Rustic Arch in Salem*." JSTOR: Journal of the Society of Architectural Historians: Vol. 51, No.3, p.315.

Newton Journal, January 9, 1902. "Deaths: Lancey." Obituary.

Newton Tricentennial Corporation, 1988. *Newton, Massachusetts 1688-1988: A Celebration of Three Hundred Years*.

Sweetser, M.F. *King's Handbook of Newton, Massachusetts*. Boston: Moses King, 1889.

(end)

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

Washington Park HD (Newton MRA)
Newton(Middlesex), MA

Section number 10 Page 1

10. GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

Boundary Description

The boundaries of the Washington Park Historic District are shown on the accompanying sketch map

Boundary Justification

The boundaries of the Washington Park Historic District have been drawn to encompass all of the neighborhood's extant original structures along an east-west axis. The boundaries have been drawn to exclude three townhouse condominiums built in the late 20th century in place of original structures in the subdivision (56 and 64 [Townhouse Drive Condominiums] and 92 Washington Park). The western edge of Washington Park Historic District adjoins the Newtonville National Register Historic District on the east property line of 105 Washington Park.

Properties that have been demolished over time in the Washington Park subdivision include:

56 Washington Park (Townhouse Drive Condominiums)

64 Washington Park (Townhouse Drive Condominiums)

92 Washington Park (located just east of the Claflin School)

(end)

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

Washington Park HD (Newton MRA)
Newton (Middlesex), MA

Section number photos Page 1

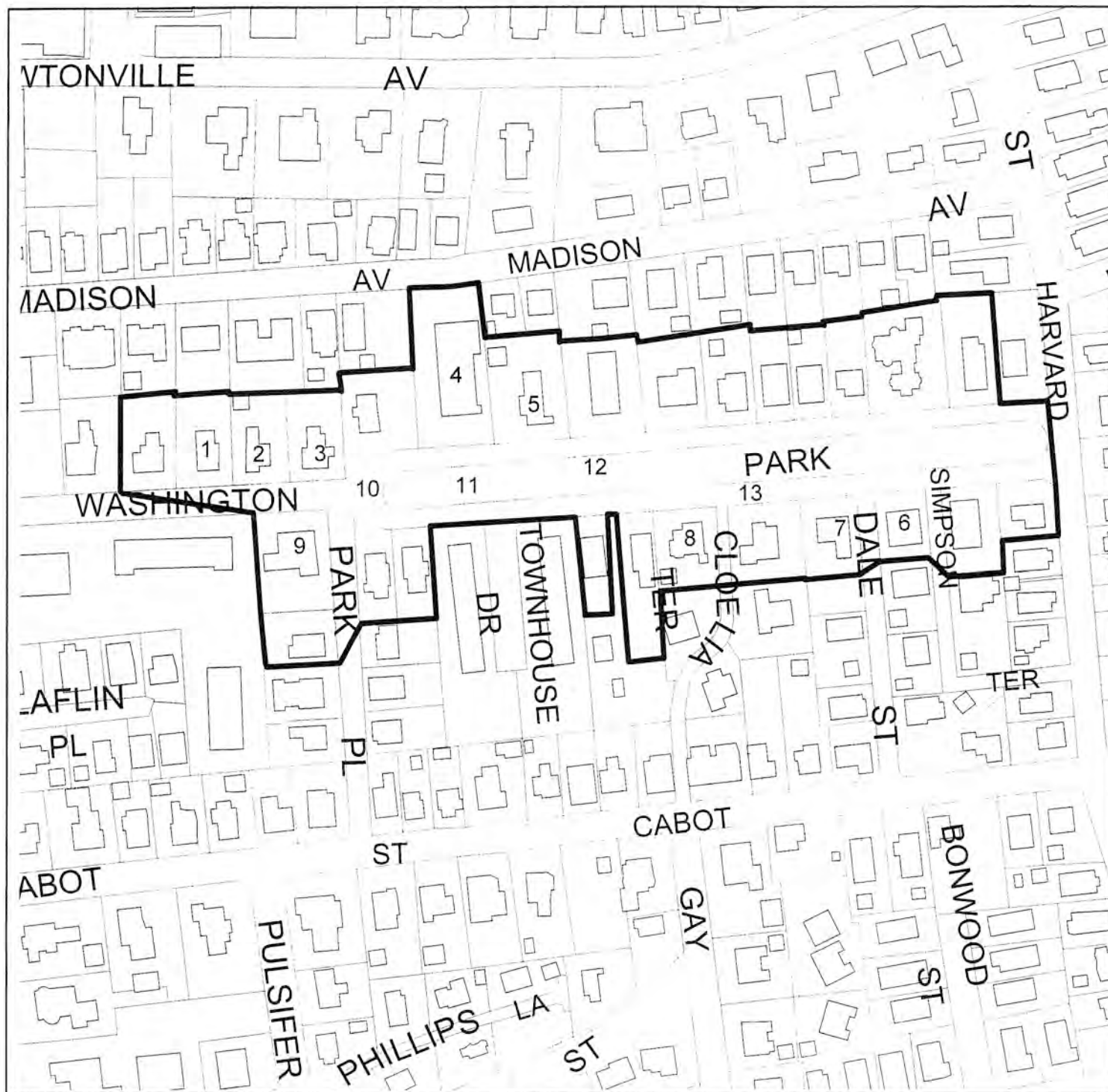
BLACK-AND-WHITE PHOTOGRAPHS

Date: February 2006

Photographer: Paul Trudeau

- 1 91 Washington Park
(west and south elevations, looking northeast)
- 2 85-87 Washington Park
(west and south elevations, looking northeast)
- 3 79 Washington Park
(west and south elevations, looking northeast)
- 4 61 Washington Park
(south façade, looking north)
- 5 55 Washington Park
(west and south elevations, looking northeast)
- 6 40 Washington Park
(north and west elevations, looking southeast)
- 7 26 Washington Park
(east and north elevations, looking southwest)
- 8 18 Washington Park
(north and west elevations, looking southeast)
- 9 5 Park Place
(east façade, looking west)
- 10 Washington Park Streetscape
(western edge of the district, looking east)
- 11 Washington Park Streetscape
(western edge of greenspace, looking west)
- 12 Washington Park Streetscape
(north-central portion of district, looking east)
- 13 Washington Park Streetscape
(south-central portion of district, looking east)

(end)



Washington Park Newtonville

City of Newton,
Massachusetts

Key to Photographs

- 1) 91 Washington Park
- 2) 85-87 Washington Park
- 3) 79 Washington Park
- 4) 61 Washington Park
- 5) 55 Washington Park
- 6) 18 Washington Park
- 7) 26 Washington Park
- 8) 40 Washington Park
- 9) 5 Park Place
- 10) Streetscape (view to east)
- 11) Streetscape (view to west)
- 12) Streetscape (view to east)
- 13) Streetscape (view to east)



City of Newton
Mayor - David B. Cohen
GIS Administrator - Douglas Greenfield

The information on this map is from the Newton Geographic Information System (GIS). The City of Newton cannot guarantee its accuracy of nor approve applications based solely on GIS data. Applicants for city permits must inquire of the relevant city department for applicable requirements.

MAP DATE: March 14, 2006

**Washington Park Historic District
Newton, Massachusetts
National Register District Data Sheet**

INV. #*	NR PHOTO #	ASSESSOR'S #	STREET ADDRESS	HISTORIC NAME	YEAR	STYLE	STATUS	RESOURCE
NWT.2395	9	22017-0001	5 Park Place (same as 84 Washington Park garage)	Arthur H. Soden House	1890 2000	Queen Anne	C NC	B B
NWT.2394	14	22017-0002	15 Park Place	Arthur H. Soden House	1890	Queen Anne	C	B
NWT.7281	15	22013-0001	4 Washington Park	Robert L. Young	1900	Colonial Revival	C	B
NWT.2410	16	22006-0036	7 Washington Park	James Sherman House	1870	Second Empire	C	B
NWT.2409	17	22013-0007	10 Washington Park	David Simpson House	1870	Second Empire	C	B
NWT.7282	35	22006-0035	15-17 Washington Park	James Sherman House	1870	Italianate	C	B
NWT.2408	8	22014-0001	18 Washington Park garage	Walter J. Paine House	1898 1920	Craftsman/ Colonial Revival	C C	B B
NWT.7283	18	22006-0034	21 Washington Park	John. T. Burns & Sons, Inc.	1912	Colonial Revival	C	B
NWT.7284	19	22006-0033	25 (23) Washington Park garage	F.A. & H.S. Horn	1912 1926	Colonial Revival	C C	B B
NWT.2407	7	22015-0001	26 Washington Park	George B. Smith	1879	Italianate	C	B

* MACRIS numbers updated 8/2009

**Washington Park Historic District
Newton, Massachusetts
National Register District Data Sheet**

INV. #	NR PHOTO #	ASSESSOR'S #	STREET ADDRESS	HISTORIC NAME	YEAR	STYLE	STATUS	RESOURCE
NWT.7285	20	22006-0032	27-29 Washington Park	E.F. Goodridge	1914	Craftsman/ Colonial Revival	C	B
NWT.7286	21	22015-0012	32 Washington Park	R.D. Morehouse House	1885	Queen Anne	C	B
			attached garage		1936			
NWT.7287	22	22006-0031	33 Washington Park	Otis E. Hunt	1890	Second Empire	C	B
			carriage house		1929		C	B
NWT.2411	23	22006-0030	37-39 Washington Park	William H. Studley House	1869	Second Empire	C	B
NWT.2406	6	22016-0001	40 (44) Washington Park	Henry F. Ross House	1890	Colonial Revival	C	B
			garage		1998		NC	B
NWT.2405	24	22016-0020	46-48 Washington Park	Edward T. Troffiter House (also owned #46-48)	1884	Italianate	C	B
NWT.2412	25	22006-0029	47-49 Washington Park	Arthur F. Soden House	1868	Second Empire	C	B
NWT.7288	26	22016-0019	50-52 Washington Park	Edward T. Troffiter House (also owned #46-48)	1886	Queen Anne	C	B
NWT.2413	5	22006-0028	55 Washington Park	Arthur H. Soden House Leon C. Carter House	1868	Second Empire	C	B
			garage		1920s		C	B
NWT.7289	4	22006-0012	61 Washington Park	Universalist Church	1873	Gothic Revival	C	B
			porte cochere		c.1900			

**Washington Park Historic District
Newton, Massachusetts
National Register District Data Sheet**

INV. #	NR PHOTO #	ASSESSOR'S #	STREET ADDRESS	HISTORIC NAME	YEAR	STYLE	STATUS	RESOURCE
NWT.2404	27	22016-0016	70 Washington Park	Mary A. Alary House	1888	Queen Anne	C	B
NWT.7290	28	22006-0027	73 Washington Park garage	J. Wesley Kimball	1875 2005	Second Empire	C NC	B B
NWT.7291	29	22016-0015	74 Washington Park	Catherine Shedd	1888	Queen Anne	C	B
NWT.7292	3	22006-0026	79 Washington Park garage	Alexander Chisholm	1865 c.1900	Astylistic	C C	B B
NWT.7293	2	22006-0025	85-87 Washington Park garage	Thomas Hurd (Lancey & Claflin owned in 1874)	1855 1935	Astylistic	C C	B B
NWT.2403	1	22006-0016	91 Washington Park garage	Oliver B. Leavitt House	1870 1925	Stick	C C	B B
NWT.2402	30	22006-0024	97 Washington Park	Dr. Charles W. Taylor House	1870	Second Empire Cottage	C	B
NWT.974	31, 32, 33, 34	46220-4294	Washington Park Greensward	Washington Park Greensward Benches Trees/plantings Electric lampposts	1865 2000 2000 2007	Central ovate greensward Wood, metal Dogwood, pine Gaslight	C NC NC NC	Si O O O

**Washington Park Historic District
Newton, Massachusetts
National Register District Data Sheet**

TOTALS

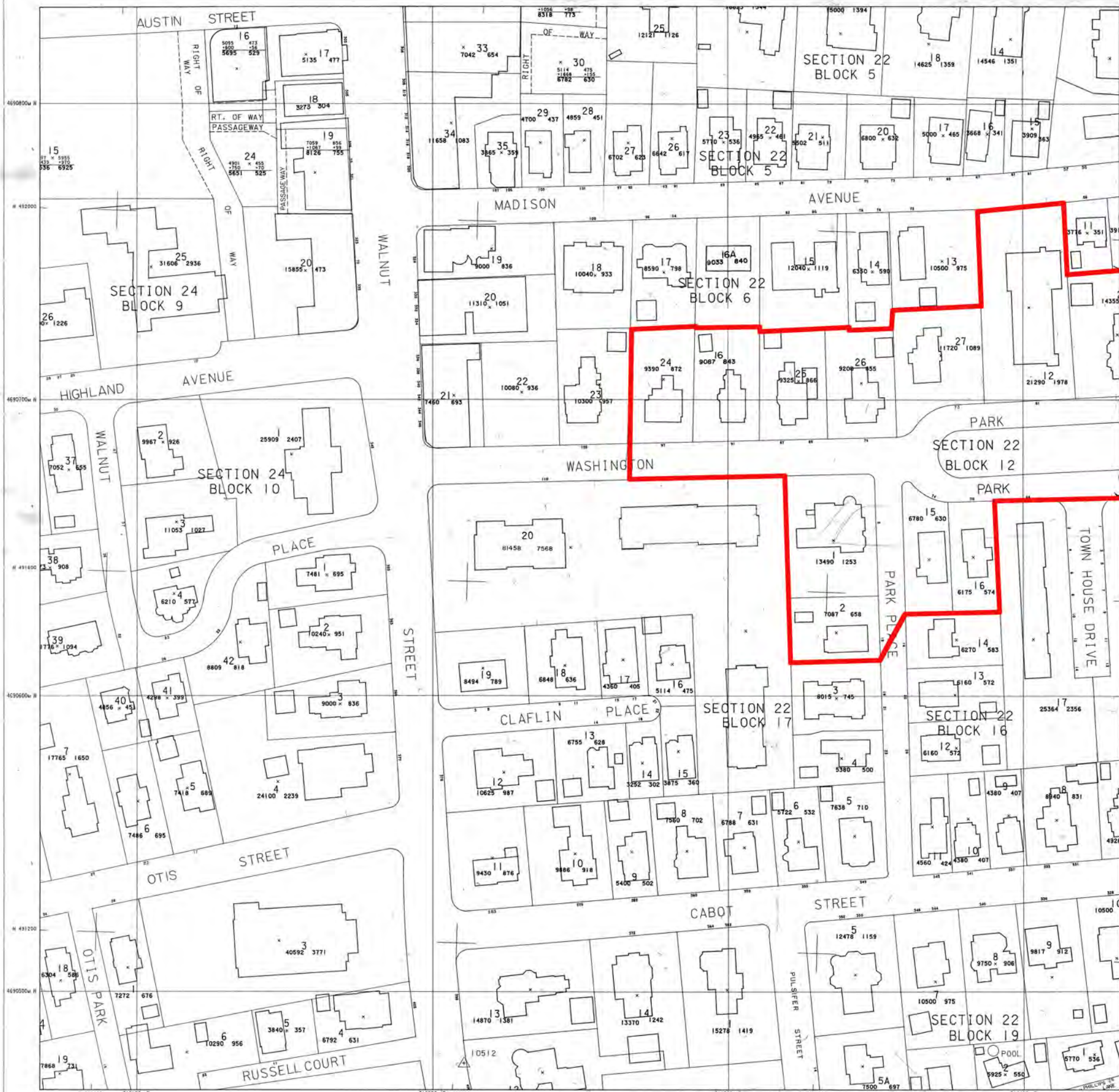
**34 Contributing Buildings
1 Contributing Site**

3 Noncontributing Buildings

3 Noncontributing objects

35 Contributing elements

6 Noncontributing elements



CITY OF NEWTON
MASSACHUSETTS

SECTION 22 - 24
BLOCK 5, 6, 12, 16, 17, 19-9, 10
SCALE 1" = 40'
PAGE 44 NE

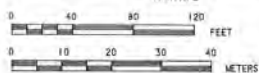
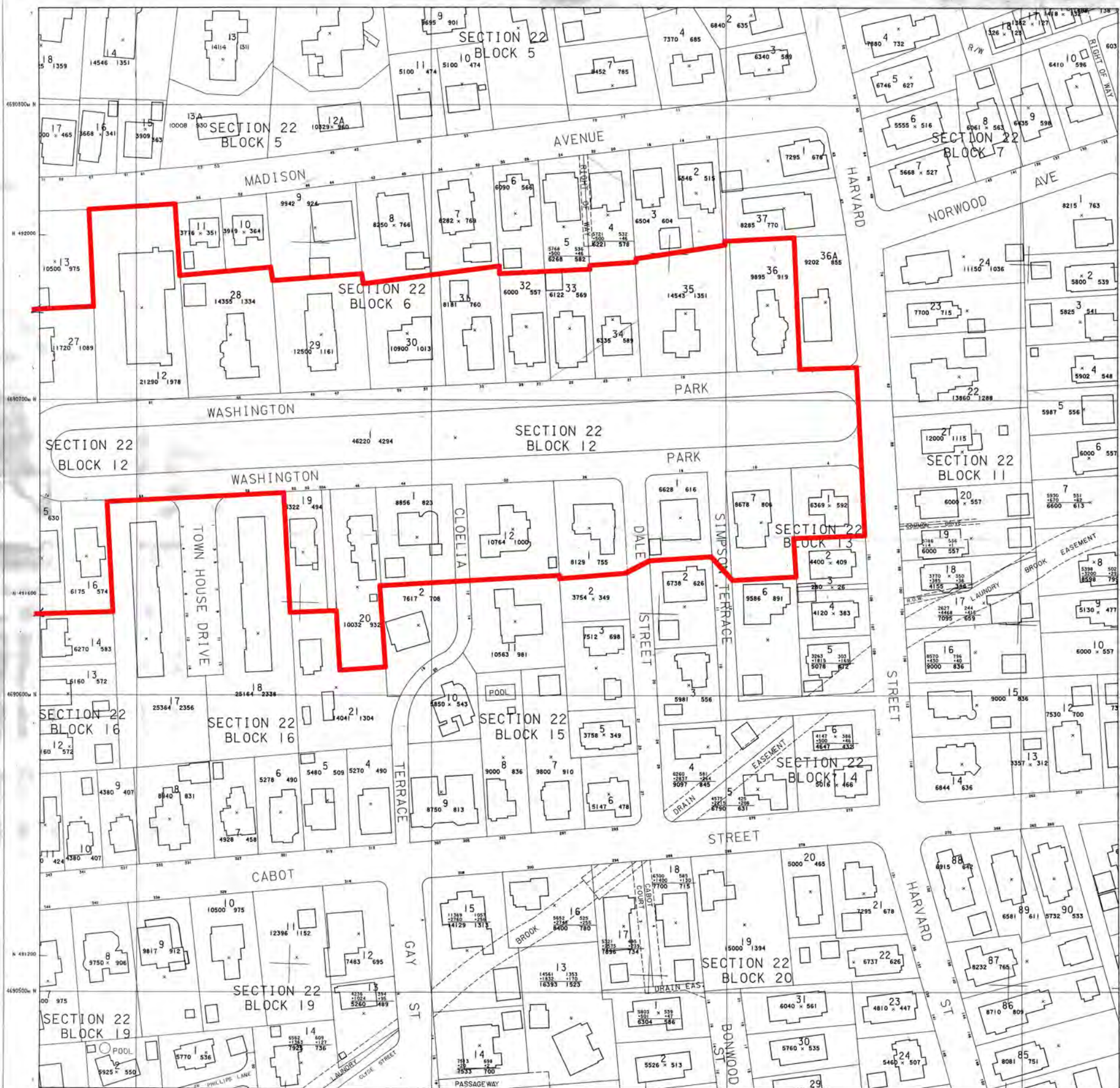
SECTION 22

BLOCK 5, 6, 7
11 THRU 16, 19, 20

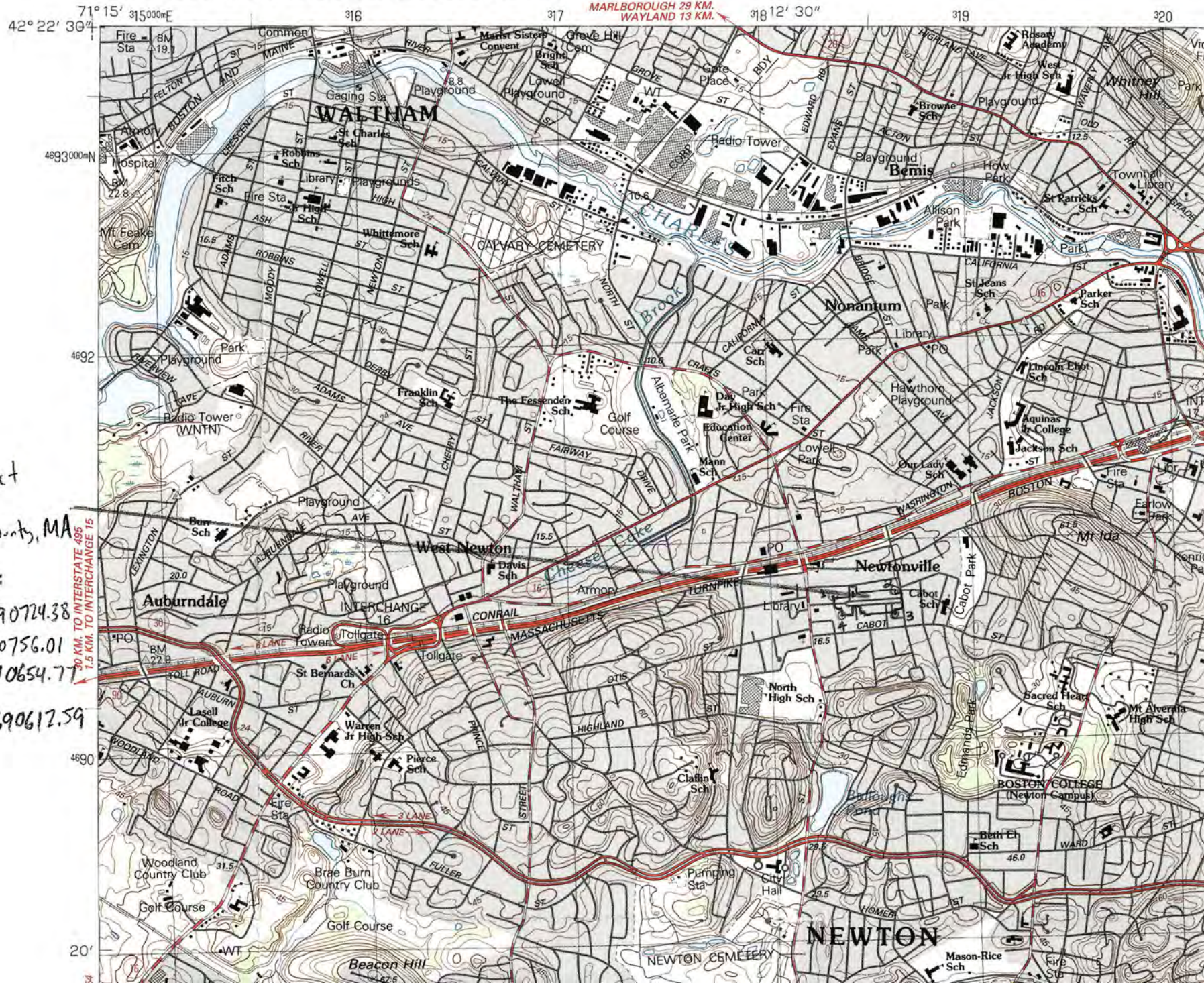
45 NW

WASHINGTON PARK HD

PAGE 2 OF 2

CITY OF NEWTON
MASSACHUSETTSSECTION 22
BLOCK 5, 6, 7, 11 THRU 16, 19, 20
SCALE 1" = 40'
PAGE 45 NW

BOSTON SOUTH, MASSACHUSETTS



Washington Park
Historic District

Jewett, Middlesex County, MA

UTM References:

1. 19/318267.03/4690724.38
2. 19/318622.43/4690756.01
3. 19/318646.69/4690654.77
4. 19/318351.40/4690612.59

30 KM. TO INTERSTATE 495
1.5 KM. TO INTERCHANGE 15

Washington Park Historic District, Newton (Middlesex County)



1. 91 Washington Park, west and south elevations, looking northeast.
(Photographer: Paul Trudeau, February 2006)



2. 85-87 Washington Park, west and south elevations, looking northeast.
(Photographer: Paul Trudeau, February 2006)



3. 79 Washington Park, west and south elevations, looking northeast.
(Photographer: Paul Trudeau, February 2006)



4. 61 Washington Park, south façade, looking north.
(Photographer: Paul Trudeau, February 2006)

Washington Park Historic District, Newton (Middlesex County)



5. 55 Washington Park, west and south elevations, looking northeast.
(Photographer: Paul Trudeau, February 2006)



6. 40 Washington Park, north and west elevations, looking southeast.
(Photographer: Paul Trudeau, February 2006)



7. 26 Washington Park, east and north elevations, looking southwest.
(Photographer: Paul Trudeau, February 2006)



8. 18 Washington Park, north and west elevations, looking southeast.
(Photographer: Paul Trudeau, February 2006)

Washington Park Historic District, Newton (Middlesex County)



9. 5 Park Place, east façade, looking west.
(Photographer: Paul Trudeau, February 2006)



10. Washington Park Streetscape, western edge of the district,
looking east. (Photographer: Paul Trudeau, February 2006)



11. Washington Park Streetscape, western edge of greenspace,
looking west. (Photographer: Paul Trudeau, February 2006)



12. Washington Park Streetscape, north-central portion of district,
looking east. (Photographer: Paul Trudeau, February 2006)

Washington Park Historic District, Newton (Middlesex County)



13. Washington Park Streetscape, south-central portion of district, looking east. (Photographer: Paul Trudeau, February 2006)